

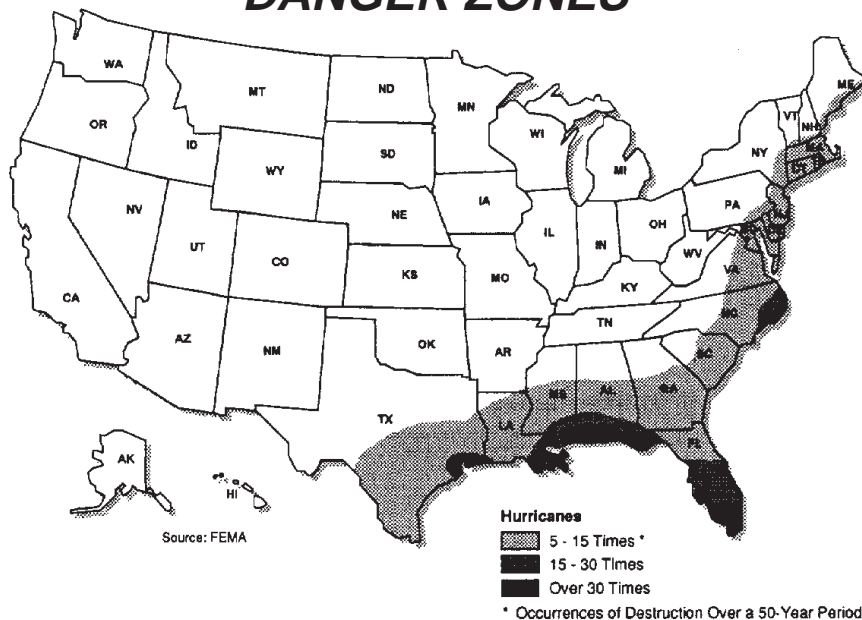
BACKGROUND

HURRICANES

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

1. The 74 to 160 mile per hour winds of a hurricane can extend inland for hundreds of miles. Hurricanes can spawn tornadoes, which add to the destructiveness of the storm. Floods and flash floods generated by torrential rains also cause damage and loss of life. Following a hurricane, inland streams and rivers can flood and trigger landslides.
2. When a hurricane watch is issued, the best response is to protect your property by boarding up windows, bringing in outside items, gathering disaster supplies, and being prepared to evacuate the area as soon as advised by emergency officials.
3. Even more dangerous than the high winds of a hurricane is the storm surge—a dome of ocean water that can be 20 feet high at its peak and 50 to 100 miles wide. The surge can devastate coastal communities as it sweeps ashore. Nine out of 10 hurricane fatalities are attributable to the storm surge.

DANGER ZONES



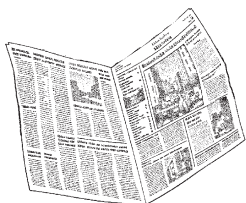
Areas in the United States vulnerable to hurricanes include the Atlantic and Gulf coasts from Texas to Maine, the territories in the Caribbean, and tropical areas of the western Pacific, including Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa, and Saipan.

WHAT IS A HURRICANE?

A hurricane is a tropical weather system with winds that have reached a sustained speed of 74 miles per hour or more. Hurricane winds blow in a large spiral around a relatively calm center known as the “eye.” The “eye” is generally 20 to 30 miles wide, and the storm may extend outward 400 miles. As a hurricane approaches, the skies will begin to darken and winds will grow in strength. As a hurricane nears land, it can bring torrential rains, high winds, and storm surges. A single hurricane can last more than two weeks over open waters and can run a path across the entire length of the eastern seaboard. August and September are peak months during the hurricane season, which lasts from June 1 through November 30.

HELP YOUR COMMUNITY GET READY

The media can raise awareness about hurricanes by providing important information to the community. Here are some suggestions:



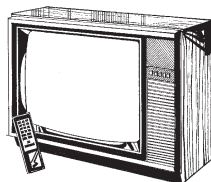
1. Publish a special section in your local newspaper with emergency information on hurricanes. Localize the information by printing the phone number of local emergency services offices, the American Red Cross, and nearby hospitals.

2. Provide hurricane tracking charts to local schools.

3. Work with local emergency services and American Red Cross officials to prepare special reports to people with mobility impairments on what to do if an evacuation is ordered.



4. Stage a simulated evacuation to show your community what can happen.



5. Periodically inform your community of local public warning systems.

DID YOU KNOW ...

- In less than a 4-week period in 1992, two major hurricanes hit the United States, leaving an unprecedented array of devastation. First, Hurricane Andrew pounded parts of Florida and Louisiana, becoming the most expensive natural disaster in U.S. history, with damage estimated at \$15 billion to \$30 billion. Then, three weeks later, Hurricane Iniki affected three Hawaiian islands, resulting in over \$1 billion in damage, particularly on Kauai.
- Eighteen of the 54 deaths attributed to Hurricane Andrew occurred during the recovery phase. Of those identified, eight were stress-induced heart attacks; three were either people falling in damaged buildings or hit by debris while

cleaning up; and two were children who died in fires in damaged homes.

- On average, 10 tropical cyclones develop in the North Atlantic each year. Of these, six may strengthen to hurricane proportion, of which two are likely to strike the coast of the United States.
- Hurricane winds in the northern hemisphere circulate in a counterclockwise motion around the hurricane's center or "eye," while hurricane winds in the southern hemisphere circulate clockwise.
- The Galveston, Texas, hurricane in 1900 was the natural disaster that resulted in the most deaths in United States history. This hurricane took 6,000 lives.

HOW THE PUBLIC CAN HELP AFTER A DISASTER

When disaster strikes, people everywhere want to help those in need. To ensure that this compassion and generosity are put to good use, the media can highlight these facts:

- Financial aid is an immediate need of disaster victims. Financial contributions should be made through a recognized voluntary organization to help ensure that contributions are put to their intended use.

- Before donating food or clothing, wait for instructions from local officials. Immediately after a disaster, relief workers usually don't have the time or facilities to set up distribution channels, and too often these items go to waste.

- Volunteers should go through a recognized voluntary agency such as the American Red Cross or the Salvation Army. They know what is needed and are prepared to deal with the need. Local emergency services officials also coordinate volunteer efforts for helping in disaster.

- Organizations and community groups wishing to donate items should first contact local officials, the American Red Cross, or the Salvation Army to find out what is needed and where to send it. Be prepared to deliver the items to one place, tell officials when you'll be there, and provide for transportation, a driver, and unloading.